"God's Country" by Joseph Goebbels

One is never sure which of two characteristics is more prominent in the American national character and therefore of the greater significance: naïveté or a superiority complex. When for example they say things about our region, our surprise at their ignorance is surpassed only by annoyance at their stupid insolence. The less they know about a matter, the more confidently they speak. They really believe that Europeans are eagerly waiting to hear from them and follow their advice. They took our strategic decision not to discuss their shallow culture before the war as a sign of admiration. Their greatest technical accomplishments are refrigerators and radios. They cannot believe that there are cultural values that are the result of centuries of historical development, which cannot simply be bought. It was no bad joke when, after the war, they bought the ruins of German castles and moved them stone by stone to the U.S.A. They really thought that they had purchased a piece of national history embodied in stone, and were naive enough to think that mocking laughter from Europe was respect for the wealth that enabled them to buy what their own tradition and culture lacked.

A book by Scottish author Eric Linklater titled "Juan in America" has just appeared in German translation. With few words but deadly irony, it holds the mirror up to the Yankees. One must read this book, which takes place in the postwar period, to rightly understand the Americans. Recently the American press claimed that Americans were of the opinion that General Rommel learned his military techniques, admired throughout the world, from the Americans. General Lee used his cavalry in the same way Rommel used his tanks. One does not know whether to be astonished or contemptuous at this naive and stupid idea. In any event, it is genuinely American, and one can give odds of 10:1 that most Americans are firmly convinced that it is so.

Only in the U.S.A., could the wife of the president receive a thousand dollar honorarium at a charity gathering, and take the money without bothering to see if the gathering for the benefit of those injured in the war would thereby run a deficit. The New York newspapers recently reported this. Mrs. Roosevelt even appears for a healthy fee as a fashion model, showing the latest furs to an admiring public. She writes a column for a large number of U.S.A. newspapers titled "My Day," in which she tells how she spent the

previous day, what she wore, which cocktail parties she attended, whom she met, and what she plans to do the next day.

We really have the wrong image of America. Hollywood films are mostly to blame, since they present the life style of the upper ten thousand, which most Americans themselves experience though films. American observers waver between unlimited admiration and deep contempt. Superficial observers admire it; real experts always hold it in contempt. There is certainly much that is at first glance impressive in this new part of the world still in its adolescence. The height of the skyscrapers is, however, no measure of the level of culture. This land that wants to protect intellectual freedom in the ancient cultures of Europe and Asia itself has no permanent theater or opera. A private concern like New York's Metropolitan Opera survives in peacetime only on German and Italian operas, and had to close its doors for financial reasons once the war began.

The U.S.A. has no poets, no painters, no architects, or composers of world stature. Whatever culture it has is borrowed from Europe. The land lacks its own language, culture, and civilization. It has borrowed everything, generally debasing it by Americanizing it, never improving it. Americanization is a kind of tastelessness that gives every cultural value an American stamp, turning a mature language into slang, the waltz into jazz, a work of literature into a crime story.

If the Americans lacked money, they would probably be the most despised people in the world. Superiority is nowhere as annoying as with them. They naturally build the best airplanes and tanks, and by the hundreds of thousands. They have the best generals and soldiers, and their defeats are only proof of their intelligence in destroying the bravery of their enemies. Their president is a demigod, though he led the nation into an economic catastrophe from which he saw no way out other than war. They promised Europe a savior in 1917 and sent them a Wilson in 1919. They will repeat this great betrayal today if we do not prevent it. In short, it is a nation still a long way from being a nation, and a people that lacks the most important prerequisite for being a people, a clear style of life. According to official American statistics, there are 190 Protestant and 430 Catholic churches in New York, but 1000 synagogues. What else should one expect of a city with a Jewish mayor who recently attempted at a reception for foreign journalists to explain European problems in the jargon of the gangsters! The Jews have given their stamp not only to this city, but the whole of public life.

The president is surrounded by Jewish advisors and his wife clears the way for her Jewish friends to enter the administration and war office. One feels the need to wash one's hands after reading American newspapers. They are filled with intellectual filth, daily printing such stories as an announcement that a number of prisoners have formed "Fighters, Inc.," and offered their services to the president. They were ready to fight in the ranks of the Allies against aggression. Mr. Roosevelt happily accepted their offer.

Can anyone name a single country in Europe where the public would accept such a thing? There was not a word of protest in the U.S.A. The same president recently told a press conference that a surprisingly large number of young people were unsuited for service in the army and the marines because they could not read or write. Is it any surprise that a cunning and demagogic leadership can do what it wants with a nation of such an educational level? At a time when U.S. forces experience one defeat after another and its ships sail the world's oceans only at the risk of death, they naively announce that they are producing a million victory medals for American soldiers to wear as a sign of their worth when they occupy Germany. American officers are studying at Southern University such matters as civil administration, the laws of war, and related matters. Their task is to return to good order the territories now occupied by the Axis powers.

So far, not a single U.S.A. soldier has set foot on foreign soil, but many have been chased back to U.S. soil in disgrace. After a siege of two or three weeks, an army of 60,000 men with munitions and food sufficient for six months gave up, leaving all of 600 dead behind. That does not bother its brilliant leadership in the least. Of course, it does not have a citizenry able to defend itself against such silly illusions. Everything is junk and make-believe. Everything is sensational. Public opinion can be kneaded like dough. It is a paradise for cunning Jews and businessmen who terrorize the people while flying the flag of democracy and citing Roosevelt's Four Freedoms. Only in the U.S.A. is it possible for criminals to become world famous gangsters, the guests of mayors and police chiefs, who give interviews for journalists from newspapers with circulations in the millions in which they give their opinions on the questions of the day.

We would not say anything if the U.S.A. were aware of its intellectual and moral defects and was trying to grow up. It is too much when it behaves in an impudent manner toward a part of the earth with a few thousands years of glorious history behind it, attempting to teach it moral and intellectual

lessons, whether out of innocence or a complete lack of genuine culture and learning. We can forgive the mistakes of youth, but this degree of arrogance gets on one's nerves.

We therefore have no appreciation for the Americanism that can be found in certain of our circles. We fail to see why we as the leading musical nation in the world should borrow even a single note from the U.S.A. We have a level of culture and civilization that is denied to most Americans. One who understands this can hardly have much sympathy for what they understand as culture and civilization. Although we affirm the technical achievements of our age, we see behind them an intellectual strength that grows from the roots of our people. Machines are a means to an end, not an end in themselves.

As much as we appreciate the achievements of modern civilization and use them to improve life, we know that they are not the sole meaning of life. There are national values that are the result of centuries of history and tradition. They cannot be purchased, only built by the labor of generations. In any event, we prefer not to be buried in America. In the midst of the confusions of the day, we still have the ability to distinguish truth from falsehood and gold from floss. We are not impressed by American big talk and orgies of numbers. We know well enough that the trees do not grow as high as heaven on the other side of the Atlantic either. As far as "God's country" goes, Europeans discovered it and give it life even today. Were it left to its own resources, it would soon return once more to desert and prairie, as wide and as empty as the souls of its people.